(a) by when it is planned to provide flight services to the frontier headquarters of Pithoragarh;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (c) It is up to the airlines to provide air services to specific places depending upon the traffic demand and commercial viability.

Government has laid down route dispersal guidelines with a view to achieve better regulation of air transport services taking into account the need for air transport services of different regions of the country. As such, the airlines are free to operate anywhere in the country subject to compliance of route dispersal guidelines issued by Government.

Incident of snapping of contact with ATC

118. SHRI PRASANTA CHATTERJEE:
SHRI MOHAMMED AMIN:
SHRI MAHENDRA MOHAN:
SHRI RAJEEV CHANDRASEKHAR:

Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that on 27th January, 2009 seven aircrafts lost all contacts with Air Traffic Controller (ATC) in Kolkata for almost 20 minutes;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what action Government is going to take a avert such occurrence in future?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) and (b) No, Sir. However, there was problem in on-board VHF equipments of one Jet Airways aircraft which resulted in jamming of frequency and blocking other aircraft operating on the same frequency. There were four other aircraft operating at the same time which were subsequently advised to change over to other frequency and operate on other frequency.

(c) To deal with such situations in accordance with ICAO Standards a procedure is already in place which was followed in the instant case also.

Air connectivity with Bhutan

†119. SHRI SAMAN PATHAK: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government of Bhutan has requested to competent authority to start a direct flight between Bhutan and Bagdogra airport;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reaction of Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. The request from Bhutan Government has been received in January, 2009 conveying

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi

plans of Druk Air to start operations to Bagdogra in Summer 2009. During the bilateral air services meeting with Bhutan held in July 2008, Bagdogra was granted as an additional point of call for designated airlines of Bhutan and they were informed that at least three months notice would be required to put in place the required facilities for operation of international services upon receiving the request from Government of Bhutan. Airports Authority of India has initiated action to accommodate meeting the requirements of proposed international operation by M/s Druk Air.

New runway at Delhi airport

†120. SHRI MOTILAL VORA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that airlines companies are displeased with the commissioning of the new runway (29-11) for flights at Delhi airport;

(b) whether Government has made any inquiry to ascertain the causes of the same;

(c) whether it is also a fact that the new runway being situated very far away from terminal not only causes the wastage of time but also the wastage of fuel;

(d) whether the new runway has facilitated the take off and landing of flights during foggy weather; and

(e) the action taken by Government to redress the grievances of airlines' companies and relieving the people living in the vicinity from noise?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (c) With the opening of new runway 29/11, there is no effect on taxying time for the International Arrival flights. However, the taxying time for Domestic Arrival flights has increased by 7-10 minutes but the hovering time of these flights has reduced significantly, which has saved time as well as fuel for the airlines.

(d) Runway 29/11 is equipped with Cat.III-B ILS which can facilitate aircraft landing and takeoff upto an RVR of 50 meters, during foggy weather.

(e) Measures are in place by Delhi International Airport Private Limited like installation of noise sensors at number of places in the vicinity of airport for studying the noise level.

Facilities at Rajasansi airport

†121. SHRI AVTAR SINGH KARIMPURI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to stater:

(a) whether there is any proposal to enhance international air services and facilities at Rajasansi airport, Amritsar for the convenience of pilgrims, tourists and Non-Resident Indians coming from all over the world to visit holy shrine of Sikhs, Harmandir Sahib in Amritsar;

(b) if so, by when it will be finalized and the names of countries from where direct flights to Amritsar are under consideration;

(c) whether Government is aware that a few airlines have cancelled their services;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi